20c MARCH 26, 1951

New Republic

CORRUPTION

TRUMAN IS RESPONSIBLE

An EDITORIAL

THE RFC STORY

By MICHAEL STRAIGHT

THE NEW OIL STEAL

By HAROLD L. ICKES

BERTRAND RUSSELL: PESSIMIST

A REVIEW BY JAMES R. NEWMAN

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

Excerpts from Readers' Letters

"The other day a friend said to me, 'I want you to send in my name to the *New Republic* you are always quoting. It makes sense to me.'

"Well, that subscription is the province of another department, but she was voicing the main reason 'Why the *New Republic* is important to me.' It makes sense. . . .

"I think it's my duty to be a well-informed citizen but I see no reason why I should be bored to death in the process of becoming one. That's another reason why I'm enthusiastic about the *New Republic.* Its literary quality gives me an aesthetic pleasure quite aside from that solid satisfaction I gain from learning what is going on in the world. To me, the columns of 'Honest Harold' Ickes smack of the crisp comments once written by William Blake on the margins of books. . . ."

Ruth A. Putman
AKRON, OHIO

"I should like to set down the reasons 'Why the *New Republic* is important to me,' or rather more precisely why the *New Republic* has suddenly again become important to me. . . .

"When the *New Republic* made its appearance in 1914 I was an undergraduate in college. . . . The new journal was a bright and welcome light, its bearers, Croly, Weyl, Straight and a group of eager fresh minds, had something stimulating to say to a young man facing the world. It was a timely and a highly fortunate experience. . . .

"We now again are living in a fearfully confounded and dangerous world. The prospects are terrifying. The news is cluttered with conflicting and unreliable accounts. . . .

"Last week I bought a copy of the *New Republic* at the newsstand. Today I bought another. What I read pleased me right down to the ground. Here was the old light again. There is the same exciting stimulus to sane thinking together with a cool and broadly based judgment operating upon the crowded and confused events of today. . . ."

Orvis C. Irwin
IOWA CITY, IOWA

"There are three reasons why the *New Republic* is important to me.

"First, I am a teacher in high school. I have students in my class in public discussion who are called upon during the year to take part in radio forums, in student discussions before various civic groups, as well as to learn discussion techniques in their regular class work. . . .

"Second, the *New Republic* has up-to-date reviews of stage and radio. These sections my students in radio and drama may use for quick reference. . . .

"Third, the *New Republic* is important to me as a citizen. If I had to depend upon my reading of newspapers to keep informed, I would probably be a die-hard Republican fighting the New Deal and boxing Roosevelt shadows. The *New Republic* comes upon me each week just as I am being misled and further confused by the barrage of one-sided comments from radio speakers and by single-minded editorials in our one newspaper. It gives me a new perspective and a hope that somehow the voice of opposition will be heard."

Dorothy Matheny
TOLEDO, OHIO

"The *New Republic* is important to me because I am a housewife in an ultra-conservative middle western town where I have little access to new ideas of any kind. . . . The *New Republic* helps me keep a good check on the administration and Congress by giving voting records and timely articles with enough fair viewpoints that I can still make up my own mind. . . .

"Just as a good argument or round table discussion can bring out the best in man's mind—so reading the *New Republic* each week makes me think—and that is an important thing to the world—making little people like me think—and care—what happens to this world of ours. That is why the *New Republic* is important to me."

Mrs. Carl E. Bushey
PARSONS, KANSAS

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New Republic

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WASHINGTON WIRE

ALMOST all sense of urgency is disappearing from Congress. You can see it seeping away at the cracks. Interest centers once more on investigations and politics. Many Congressmen seem ashamed of their scare over Korea. They slap their chests and utter platitudes about "appeasement," "Moscow" and "full defense," but actually their thoughts have wandered. Everybody is thinking about the election in 1952, not about 1951. The Big Scare produced the present massive defense program which has been voted and goes on, but it is doubtful if in the present less tense mood anything so elaborate could have been approved. Means will be found to whittle it down, particularly with regard to the draft, UMT and overseas aid, if the present complacency continues. Once more the international program of Congress depends almost wholly on Russia. Six months of mild answers from Moscow would cut the defense budget by $5 billion.

Truman asked for $16.5 billion of new taxes at the height of the Korean crisis, but his request stands merely as a sentimental marker of the high waters of national urgency—the white line on the town square to show where the flood reached. Truman won't get quick action; the pay-as-you-go policy is dead already, and it will surprise some if Congress finally votes even $6 billion in new taxes. Of course this makes inflation harder to curb. The stabilization agencies are having trouble, but it's hard to see Congress voting them any more powers. Last week the House expressed its mood by throwing out two Administration requests—one for emergency action on a defense-housing program and a second for emergency powers to reorganize the government. Simultaneously, the Democratic House leadership is holding up the grain-for-India program in the Rules Committee because it isn't sure it has the votes for floor passage. Hi-ho, where is the urgency of yesterday?

For three or four weeks Mao Tse-tung, Chinese Red leader, has been out of sight, and Washington has not known where to find him. As likely a guess as any is that he has been in Russia. The speculation seems at least plausible: things haven't been going well for Mao in Korea, and he probably wants to know what Russia will do about it. He was in Moscow in mid-winter a year ago when, in all probability, the Korean adventure was planned and probably all sorts of other little adventures in Burma, Siam, Formosa, Indo-China and Tibet. The Korean stalemate may be all that has held most of them up. Top leaders in Washington have to be prepared for everything; they don't think Russia will come in now in Korea, but they must take stock of the possibility. Some solemn warnings have been uttered here by pre-arranged plan. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology president, Vannevar Bush, for example, stated harshly and frankly what Russia might expect from the A-bomb.

The gathering in Washington by the United Labor Policy Committee of delegates from all parts of the country, representing the AFL, the CIO and most of the independent trade unions, should strengthen labor in its fight for a stronger role in the defense set-up. There seems considerable hope that the Administration will make enough concessions to bring labor back into a reorganized Wage Stabilization Board. This is not merely a fight for economic rewards. Labor insists on a new status at the council table. Organized labor's rise in America has been too sudden for some people to grasp its social significance even yet; Mobilization Director Charles E. Wilson is one of this type.

President Truman has lost prestige in the Reconstruction Finance Corporation

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hearings. The RFC affair was expressed in terms the public could understand—a mink coat and free rooms at swank Florida hotels—and it reached right up to the White House. Now, the public has a mystical feeling about the White House. It is one of the sacred symbols by which we live. In this case, Donald Dawson, a Presidential assistant whose acts were under question, had every opportunity to go voluntarily before the Fulbright committee and clear his name. He did not do so, his failure shocks his friends.

The New York *Herald Tribune*, leading Republican organ in the East, published two powerful, signed articles about Senator Taft on its editorial page last week. They came right out and used a nasty word: they said that Taft was, and is, an "isolationist." To us, these pieces seem something of a landmark. Republicans have been trying, hope against hope, to make believe Taft is something he isn't. Following his re-election over a weak Ohio Democrat, the author of the Taft-Hartley law became something of a hero to the GOP. It is difficult and damaging to show how completely the man who is symbolically called "Mr. Republican" has been wrong on foreign policy. But facts are on record which cannot be denied. The *Herald Tribune* comment is significant because it indicates the intention of the internationalist Republicans to cut themselves loose from a Presidential liability before it is too late. We are glad to agree with them. It has long been this column's belief that as a Presidential candidate Taft just wouldn't do. His nomination would be a GOP calamity, and—even if defeated—a national calamity. Between the lines you discover that the *Herald Tribune* thinks so too.

Notes: The Committee on Academic Freedom of the University of California reports that at least 110 scholars, including "some of the illustrious minds of our generation," have been lost through the regents' insistence on a blanket loyalty oath. . . . Turkey and Greece want to join the North Atlantic Pact. . . . The House will probably kill the UMT feature of the draft act.

Washington T.R.B.

CORRESPONDENCE

White Collars Are Too Tight

SIR: As a Rabbi, I receive now the same salary as I did seven months ago, when I first came here. We have household help and sitters only very rarely. My wife has not bought a party dress in three years. I carry a modest amount of insurance. Our car, without which I would be helpless, is three years old. The major portion of my wardrobe was purchased before I was married four years ago. Our savings are at the lowest point in my 15 years in the ministry. We cannot possibly plan any kind of vacation. We have been to two movies and one night-club in this period of time.

I am perfectly willing to make sacrifices for the defense of our country but there is a limit somewhere. We are, as you can see, living anything but luxuriously. The table allowance, being static, provides much less than seven months ago. How can one in my, or in a comparable, position pay more taxes without occasioning serious damage? We certainly have not been benefitted by inflation. The economic disaster, a likelihood which is dismissed in an article in the February 12 issue of the *NR*, will surely strike a large segment of our nation, if not the nation as a whole. Where is all this excess money of which you write? A lot of white-collar folks would love to know, just to provide necessities.

Chicago, Ill. D. N.

Science and Human Values

SIR: There is a feature of the big meeting of scientists that Avrahm Mezerik overlooks (*NR*, February 5). That is the symposium on Science and Human Values to which the AAAS devoted the second day of its Cleveland meeting. That symposium afforded abundant evidence that scientists have something better to do than beat their breasts about the atomic bomb. A lot of them are busy creating a new intellectual climate quite different from the nineteenth century materialism that contributes so much to the defeatism that plagues us.

These were top-flight men reporting on how they are using research in problems of human relations. "The scientific method is by far the most powerful problem-solving tool yet discovered," Rensis Likert declared, and Paul Sears, Otto Klineberg and others presented exciting evidence that research "can provide important scientific results and valuable information to guide policy."

They even talked about how policy-makers could use these tools. No, they didn't solve that one in Cleveland. But they made it clear that enough basic research is already done to permit a Manhattan Project in human-relation sciences that could balance the destructive potential of the 1941-45 concentration of effort in nuclear physics.

Richmond, Va. MARGARET SNYDER

Where the Tax Hurts

SIR: Your concern over the "Small Business Squeeze," (*NR*, January 29) though confined to specific aspects, is well justified. The traditional liberal attitude may well be personified in the "small business man"—taken as a group to include entrepreneur, artisan, artist and professional (with the size of his independent economic unit as the criterion).

Yet liberal leaders, in general, have ignored or even favored the quiet imposition of an uncandid and inequitable tax upon this class—the extension of Social Security to an estimated five million "self-employed" persons. As a group, this minority, harassed by the problems of a rugged, competitive struggle, its own progressive loss of position for two decades in relation to the traditional economic "working class," and the already mountainous requirements of governmental procedure for the small unit, has not had time to contemplate the significance of this new imposition.

The tax amounts to $81 at the start, in 1952, and rises to $211.50 per year, assuming no further increase in rates or in the present maximum taxable income of $3,600 for persons earning an average of $70 per week or over.

For this tax, which would amount to $9,306 at the maximum figure over a full business life from 21 to 65 years of age, the self-employed person may receive the dubious benefit of being forced to give up his business and take the small monthly payment to which he may be entitled for the rest of his life. . . .

One aspect of this tax, in which I freely admit a personal interest, has been amazingly overlooked—its impact upon writers and other communications workers. It constitutes a license tax of prohibitive size potentially, as shown above, upon, for instance, a writer in the pursuit of his profession, and ultimately offers him a bribe to cease writing. . . .

Detroit HAVILAND F. REVES

State FEPC

SIR: When the wartime Federal Fair Employment Practice Commission was ended, there began a movement by progressive states to establish their own FEPCs to fill the gap.

(*Continued on page 23*)

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New Republic

TRUMAN IS TO BLAME

PRESIDENT TRUMAN is indignant at all talk of impropriety in government. His house, he says, is clean; his Administration is made up entirely of honorable men.

History, the President adds, took time to evaluate Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln and Cleveland. Given time, he hopes, history will couple his name with those of Presidents who strove for peace.

Unfortunately, the story of corruption, now being dragged toward the surface like a writhing sea monster, mocks the President's claim. His house is far from clean, and unless he cleans house very soon history is far more likely to couple the names of Harry Truman and Warren Gamaliel Harding.

During the Presidency of Harry Truman the role of the federal government has greatly expanded. It grants certain airlines charters to encircle the world and denies charters to others. It grants certain radio and television stations licenses to reach millions of citizens each day and denies licenses to others. It certifies to certain interests monopoly control over natural gas lines, electric power franchises and oil concessions that earn billions in profits each year. It disposes of vast quantities of surplus property and it stockpiles new property. This year the Bureau of Internal Revenue is collecting $50 billion in taxes, while the armed forces are letting contracts at an annual rate between $50 and $60 billion. One cent taken from every hundred dollars of that total adds up to a very large fortune.

All these activities are necessary and all test the integrity and honesty of public officials. Ninety-nine out of every hundred public officials meet the test. The one percent is rotten and the rottenness is the responsibility of Harry Truman. There are disease germs in every body, and growing bodies dispose of them by their innate health. The germs in the federal government surround the White House and by tolerating them Truman robs the federal government of its power to remain healthy.

Truman, of course, is not alone to blame. The government operates in a climate in which wealth is envied and graft is taken for granted. The pretense that private industry is holier than public service is the height of hypocrisy. The buyer who takes a kickback, the clerk who fudges the inventories, the vice-president who manipulates stock are commonplace in business. No one hears of them because to protect the reputation of their employers they are rarely prosecuted when they are caught. Government, in contrast, operates in the open. And because its reputation is tied into the fabric of democratic faith its standards must be set higher and continually raised as the functions of government increase.

Instead, thanks to Truman's indifference, three thousand RFC employees are exposed to intolerable suspicion, and hundreds of thousands whose livelihood depend on government lending are jeopardized because of the criminal greed of a few well-protected men.

But the RFC is not the whole story. A thorough Congressional investigation, we believe, would establish these further facts:

Insiders were fed valuable information on sales by the Office of the Alien Property Custodian and rewarded their informants;

Nominations to the Federal Power Commission and its licensing decisions were improperly influenced by oil, gas and utility interests;

Anti-trust suits have been traded for personal and party profit by the Department of Justice;

Millions of dollars were improperly made by shipowners as the result of favoritism and administrative weakness in the Maritime Commission;

Army and Naval Ordnance contracts have been channeled to enrich a select few companies;

Other agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission remain honest because they are so completely dominated by the industries they are supposed to regulate that their powers are gutted;

The Civil Aeronautics Board has become the tool of a few major airlines in their efforts to stamp out competition.

The CAB, we suggest, is the next field for Congressional investigation. Congress should ask why the non-scheduled airlines have been denied any voice on the CAB. It should ask why, since the air-freight services operated by veterans are far more vital to defense than the luxury airlines, the CAB has set out systematically to discourage and starve these services. It should

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investigate the huge expense accounts charged off by Pan-American and other giant companies, knowing that every olive in every martini is paid for with taxpayers' money fed out in airmail subsidies to deficit companies. It should thumb through the campaign contributions to both parties made by numberless agents, employees and representatives of major airlines and relate these to appointments to the CAB.

Congress should further investigate the number of federal officials who have moved from regulatory agencies to vice-presidencies of the corporations they regulated.

It should re-examine the padded expense accounts of major companies and the $10 million that registered lobbyists admit spending each year.

It should check on the transfer of stock to government officials.

It should check on who sells the insurance policies taken out by contractors with the federal government. For since premiums and policies are uniform, insurance commissions are the simplest means of payment for services rendered.

Where the flying fish break, the shark is cruising beneath the surface. The shark beneath the surface of the cases uncovered so far is the Democratic National Committee. Corruption was brought into the Democratic National Committee by Bob Hannegan who came poor to Washington and left $3 million when he died. Into every investigation of corruption, the Committee's name has crept. Rex Jacobs worked through the Committee. Merl Young was an official of the Committee. Turney Gratz (now vice-president of Hadacol) was a Committee employee. Ed Pauley was Committee treasurer and chief money raiser. The National Committee has sought out the financial backing of gamblers seeking protection and of lobbyists seeking favors. "Influence peddlers" are mainstays for the purchase of $1,000 tables for the annual Jefferson-Jackson Day dinners in New York and Washington. In at least one large state it appears that collusion between state party officials and the local collector of internal revenue led to tax fixes for gamblers, racketeers and businessmen and kickbacks to Democratic politicians to whom elections were incidental to party control.

There is no question of Truman's integrity. There is also no question that time and again under Truman the prestige of the White House has been misused. Truman bestowed great federal power on Mon Wallgren, charged with trafficking in liquor licenses as Governor of Washington State. It was as a member of Truman's cabinet that Julius Krug grew rich. Still unexplained is Truman's immediate reversal of a CAB order forbidding the merger of Pan-American and American Overseas Airlines on the grounds that it promoted monopoly. Eight months later, not one of the Board members who voted against the merger is still a member of the CAB.

The President has surrounded himself by hacks, willing, even eager, to misuse the power of the Presidency. To these men he swears undying loyalty. His loyalty, a traditional virtue, is his greatest weakness. A further basic failing is his notion that if an act is legal it is all right.

Close to the President in importance comes the man who decides who sees the President. The power of the White House door key is tremendous. The key is held by Matthew Connelly, whose name has been linked over and over with special interest including American Airlines. For five years the independent airline operators have tried without success to spend 15 minutes with the President. In the same way, leaders of the Railroad Brotherhoods found the White House doors barred to them during weeks of deadlock during which the railroads collected windfall profits at the rate of $4 million a week. Readers of this editorial might well check in five years to see if any White House advisers are earning consultant fees from the railroads.

When General Vaughan was caught carting away his deep freezers, friends of the President took it for granted that he would take action. Instead the President kept Vaughan after telling him not to talk. For General Graham, caught in illegal market speculation, the President is now seeking promotion. John Maragon, who was arrested, threatened to talk. Then he fell silent, presumably with the assurance that he would be cared for. Now Merl Young is caught red-handed, but his wife stays on at the White House. He also may take punishment in silence, in the hope of receiving rewards in the future.

The problem is deeper than we admit; the solution is simpler than it seems. Washington needs new leadership—a fearless RFC administrator, a dedicated Attorney General, a vigorous Secretary of the Treasury, a first-class White House staff could change the whole picture. Thousands of loyal government officials who have been keeping their heads down and their mouths shut because they distrust their superiors would respond at once. Confidence would be restored.

The American people have the right to demand this. The issue far transcends the stubborn pride of Harry Truman. The responsibility is his. But if he will not face it, the Senators of his party must act. At stake are the concepts of the Fair Deal and the hopes of millions of men.

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THE WEEK

GOUGING OR PLANNING?

Backed up by a Senate report which charged that our tin-producing allies were "gouging" the American taxpayer, the Administration has called a temporary halt to its tin-stockpiling program. Other industrial nations have also been bitterly deploring the skyrocketing prices of raw materials. So far, however, competitive bidding between the Western allies has gone unchecked. As a result Britain is angry about the shortage of US cotton for its mills; Americans are caustic about the hold-up prices of rubber and tin from British colonies, while the countries with little bargaining power have futilely filed vehement protests with both.

The increased armament efforts begun last summer caught international raw materials markets just as they were getting back to normal. Early in 1950 the Economic Commission for Europe had ended its coal allocation program, the last major international materials control, but increased post-Korean American buying caused new scarcities and steadily climbing prices. When Prime Minister Attlee came to Washington in December to discuss the China crisis, he demanded that the problem of raw materials be given top priority in Western planning.

As a result, over a dozen nations are represented at the International Materials Conference being held in Washington this month. At the invitation of Britain, France and the US, the major producing and consuming nations are organized in six independent committees to map plans looking toward the creation of adequate allocation machinery for 11 scarce materials. Since only the major countries have been invited, many of the smaller producers and consumers are uneasy as to how the cake will be cut in their absence. The committees are supposed to exercise a "trusteeship" function, but the Latin American countries and the smaller European and Dominican countries are pressing for a direct representation.

The conference faces huge problems in attempting to set up a long-term peace-time system of materials distribution. The interests of *importing* countries must be weighed according to the needs of their civilian economies and the contribution of their defense industries, but the demands of "neutrals" in the East-West struggle must also be considered. The *producing* countries must be persuaded that it is to their long-term advantage to enter into a planning agency to keep prices down

A working arrangement looking toward the allocation of the scarce basic commodities requires that other countries join the Big Three to organize co-ordination of efforts and aims. Increasing European dissatisfaction with American stockpiling procedures gives an inkling of the trouble autarchic materials buying can cause. The committees meeting independently in Washington have — in official terms — "extremely broad terms of reference." They must utilize these toward the creation of an organization which can plan in an area where planning is a prime necessity.

McCARTHYISM STOPPED

NASHVILLE, TENN. (NR corresp.)

The Tennessee state legislature has tossed out two stringent anti-subversive bills, introduced by Sen. Frank Taylor and modeled after Maryland's Ober law. The fight showed how McCarthyism can be met and routed when active opposition is advanced.

Taylor's bills had the blessing of Gov. Gordon Browning and a majority of the members of both houses signed up in support of them. It looked, at first, like an easy victory. A carbon copy of the Ober Act was recently whisked through the Mississippi legislature. And the Illinois State Senate's Military Affairs Committee has recommended unanimously a similar bill.

When the provisions of Taylor's bills became known, church leaders, lawyers, university faculty members and the press formed a solid front. Taylor fought back with wild charges about Communism in the press, the bar and public schools. He even plastered the Red label on impeccably conservative Vanderbilt University when 150 professors signed a resolution directed against the bills. Columnist-radio commentator Fulton Lewis Jr. took up the cudgels for Taylor as a great patriot defending true Americanism against pinkos and appeasers.

Tennessee's aged constitution, written for the most part in 1796 and saturated with the philosophy of the American Revolution, was the most effective weapon used against Taylor. The constitution decries the doctrine of nonresistance as "absurd" and "slavish," asserts the right of revolution and proclaims that the people may abolish their government "in such manner as they may think proper." It rules out any form of test oath other than a simple affirmation to support the constitution, and insists upon "the free communion of thoughts and opinions." Taylor enlisted the attorney general to help devise a loyalty oath that would not too obviously violate the constitution.

The bills were introduced in both houses with great fanfare, bearing the names of comfortable majorities as sponsors. Rep. Mary Shadow Hill, youthful political scientist, put the House on the spot with a resolution reaffirming faith in the principles of individual freedom. The resolution was made by stringing together the most telling parts of the state constitution's "Declaration of Rights" and Jefferson's first inaugural address. Shame-faced members began to march up and withdraw their names as sponsors of the bills. By next day, the number had reached 13 and the measure had lost majority support. Taylor finally ordered the bills withdrawn "for further study." Later, when he thought things had quieted down, he risked a test vote in the Senate but lost by a 23-to-6 margin.

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BI-PARTISAN SLUMS

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THE VATICAN'S FEUD WITH AMERICA

by Percy Winner

POPE PIUS XII granted a private audience to General Eisenhower in 1944 when the American officer came to Rome as the commander of the armies liberating Europe from the aggressive internationalism of the Nazi Germans. The Vatican is far more anti-Communist than it ever was anti-Fascist or anti-Nazi; it is also more deeply committed to opposition to the aggressive internationalism of the Communist Russians. Yet, when Eisenhower came to Rome early this year in the capacity of organizer of armies intended to protect Europe from precisely this peril, he was not granted an audience with the Pope.

The reasons have little to do with the pontiff's personal attitude toward the Commander of SHAPE. They come from a change in the attitude of the Holy See toward the foreign policy of the United States Government, and also toward the personal role of the American President in world affairs as conceived by Harry S. Truman. The cordiality which had developed steadily during World War II, the result in no small measure of the excellent relations established by Franklin D. Roosevelt with the Pope, has been gradually replaced by coolness.

The relations between the Holy See and the American Government have become more distant than at any time since the Pope, a life-long friend of America, assumed the Triple Tiara. And there may be historical irony in the fact that the deterioration came, in the first place, from an event which, at the time, seemed the posthumously crowning achievement of FDR's policy of close co-operation with the Pope. That was the common front established by the State Department and the officials who run the Holy See's political affairs, to defeat the Italian Communists in the election of April 18, 1948.

The Pope interpreted the victory in the election as justifying his project to make all of Italy a kind of national "open city" safe both from revolution and from war. The Americans, on the other hand, saw it as bringing Italy within the area of close co-operation with Washington to support the Truman Doctrine. When General Marshall visited the Pope at Castelgandolfo in the autumn of 1948, the divergence in their views was so great that Marshall was quoted as saying that "these men in the Vatican won't be convinced until they see the Russians camped in Saint Peter's Square."

In 1949, however, relations improved, and by the period just before the start of Holy Year, the Vatican and the State Department were working closer together. But, as was pointed out in a series of four articles by this writer in the *New Republic* in the late autumn of 1949, the Vatican expected strong support from the Americans to make Holy Year a great show of strength against Communism. Instead, no successor as "Personal Representative" of the US President to the Pope was, nor has been, appointed after the resignation of Myron Taylor in December, 1949.

Holy Year definitely fell far short of expectations. The number of pilgrims, while large, included relatively few foreigners; among these foreigners the number of Americans, especially those with prestige and wealth, was far smaller than had been expected. Both Washington and the American hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church were blamed, the government for a policy which (in the Vatican's view) lent itself to hysterical fear of war, and hence reluctance to travel; the hierarchy for a tendency to subordinate its long-term spiritual role of full support for the Mother Church's major "spiritual mobilization" to a transitory political task of perfervid national patriotism. The Church not only recognizes that some prominent Catholics in America have lent themselves to preventive war "preachments" but that plenty of Catholic clerics in America adhere to a kind of ecclesiastical "Americanism" that echoes with overtones of a variety of latter-day Gallican heresy.

During the latter part of Holy Year, new causes of resentment appeared. Very important among these was the apparent intention of the American Government to blanket and overwhelm with an aggressive Atlanticism the previously growing trend toward the formation of a "Christian Europe."

The Americans—including highly placed Catholics—seemed to fail to see how much importance the Pope attached to an accurate interpretation of and an effective support for such directives as "the great return," "the great pardon," and the encyclical, *humani generis*. Bent on an overwhelmingly military approach to the problems presented by the exacerbation of the Cold War, the Americans failed to recognize that there could be a struggle for peace other than that of the Stockholm Declaration and the Communist Partisans of Peace.

The official Vatican newspaper, *Osservatore Romano*, has on a number of occasions protested against the notion that the Communists were alone in their peace campaigning. In early March the newspaper published an exchange of letters between Frederic Joliot-Curie, the French atomic scientist who is president of the Communist World Peace Congress, and Monsignor Giovanni-Battista Montini, the Deputy Secretary of State for the

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Holy See. Excerpts from Monsignor Montini's communication suggest the Pope's views. "One cannot help but see with pleasure that there is recognition of the fact that the Supreme Pontiff always has spoken in favor of a peace, a just peace. This is a point which has been denied and ignored many times. The Holy See has repeatedly proclaimed the need for proceeding seriously and honestly to a progressive and adequate limitation of armaments."

It would be a complete falsification of the significance of the exchange to believe that the Vatican is any the less opposed to Communism. Yet the point for Americans is that a spokesman for the Pope accepted with "pleasure" and "examined very closely" a message from one of the world's leading Communists because it provided an opportunity to put the Vatican on record once more as being opposed to war.

The Vatican struggles for peace (while not abating its struggle against Communism or Soviet imperialism) for many reasons—spiritual, moral, historical and also practical. For example, there are perhaps a hundred million Roman Catholics behind the Iron Curtain in the Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Although the Church has threatened with excommunication Catholics who knowingly and willingly practice Communism, relatively few have in fact been excommunicated. It is a major effort of the Church to help the "temporarily lost" Catholics beyond the Iron Curtain as much as possible; and it would be a tragedy to be in the position of sanctioning a war of extermination against them.

Certain phrases in the Pope's Christmas message and in his New Year's speech to the diplomatic corps were widely interpreted as meaning that he felt the Americans were deliberately closing the door to effective negotiations with the East. When Prime Minister Clement Attlee went to Washington, he carried with him the good wishes of the Vatican (as this column pointed out at the time). It was a matter of bitterness at the Holy See that the Vatican attitude toward the atom bomb—not only as a weapon but also as a threat—an attitude of the strongest opposition, could have no other spokesman than an English Protestant statesman.

An important French-Catholic writer, Andre Containe, has pointed out that:

> Despite the community of views which united Pius XII and Roosevelt, the Holy See has always had some reservations about American psychology—not only that it is summary and arbitrary but that it is profoundly materialistic. The increase of the influence of South America in Rome (as opposed to North America) shows these worries. With these [North American] baseball players, even if they are bishops or monks, the Vatican feels less confident than with Europeans.

Another cause of resentment has been the feeling in high Vatican quarters that the economic difficulties, inevitably aggravated because of the effect of high-pressure and high-speed rearmament in Western Europe, call for a renewed and reinforced attention to social justice, while America is so committed to the technical mechanics of production and mobilization for war that it not only neglects but tends to deny this fact. More and more, in recent months, spokesmen for the Vatican have been calling for a struggle against Communism on the front of economic reform; and by the force of events, the relatively progressive elements in the Holy See and in the Western European hierarchies have become both more powerful than the reactionary elements, and also more anti-American.

From the ecclesiastical point of view, the high point of Holy Year was of course the proclamation of the dogma of the physical Assumption of Mary. But it has seemed at the Vatican that American Catholics have not given enough attention to the real meaning of the provisions of the Holy Office by which "personal" contacts between Catholics and persons of other Christian faiths are permitted under certain circumstances.

Last, but far from least among the major factors in the deterioration of relations between the Vatican and the American Government (and hierarchy), is the effect of President Truman's tact as illustrated by lumping together Pope Pius with the Lama of Tibet, the successor of Mohammed and various and sundry other religious leaders, and in a context which suggested that the Pope would be his—Truman's—aid, as perhaps an Italian general might be Eisenhower's, in a worldwide mobilization of spiritual forces against materialist atheism.

There is no doubt at all that Truman speaks with the deepest sincerity when he puts all religions (and all scraps and bits of religion) on the same and equal footing; or that he has the best intentions when he enlists a nonsectarian God in the service of America's "moral crusade" against the devils of sinful Communism. But in European Catholic circles, and even more in the city of Saint Peter's Rock, the President often sounds as if he considered himself a kind of super or over-all Pope of all religions.

The result is unfortunate. For neither Truman nor any other highly placed American would make the error (perhaps apocryphally) ascribed to Stalin of asking: "How many divisions has the Pope?" American policy-makers know quite well that the Pope has armies, though they may not have tanks and airplanes. And this is no time to alienate armies, especially those over which the Pope has influence if not the power of command.

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PLOWING BRANNAN UNDER

by A. J. Heidenheimer

BIG FARM operators are quietly pressing a brazen bid to become partners with big business in Charles E. Wilson's growing mobilization hierarchy. These men, who serve on bank-boards and control nationwide rural associations, have long been gunning for Agriculture Secretary Brannan. They see the present "emergency" as a new opportunity to "take over" by making Brannan a flunky who receives his orders from their appointees in the top offices of the defense apparatus.

Led by Allan B. Kline, the Iowa Republican head of the Farm Bureau Federation, who has fought against price controls almost as hotly as he has feuded with Brannan, the conservative farm leaders have been dickering with Wilson in secret sessions. All they want, they say, is for Wilson to pick one of their number as his adviser on agricultural matters. According to law—the Defense Production Act—and custom—the tradition of executive responsibility—that function should belong to Brannan, but Brannan has not even been consulted by Wilson's office.

The "get-Brannan" drive was launched at a quiet January meeting in Washington. The top farm leaders of the country had met, ironically, under the aegis of the Farm Supply Committee, an independent group created to co-ordinate agriculture with mobilization. Besides Farm Bureau spokesman Roger Fleming, the conferees included Paul Taber of the Grange and John H. Davis of the League of Farmer Co-operatives, groups which are somewhat less conservative than the Bureau but usually follow its lead, and Benton Stong of the National Farmers Union, which has worked closely with Brannan.

Ostensibly called to consider ways to insure adequate farm-machinery production, the meeting was opened by Fleming's denouncing the Administration's "cheap money policy," historically a prime aim of American farmers—at least the family-farm type. Then, over Stong's objections, the meeting went on to consider means by which agricultural interests could be directly represented in the mobilization machinery. This function has up to now been specifically allocated to Brannan's department. Stong left at this point. Davis, whose group represents small country co-ops grown into big farm-commercial enterprises, then picked up the ball to suggest the need for spokesmen who would pull off price controls as quickly as supply caught up with demand.

But Fleming went him one better. The Bureau's view is that controls must come off whether supply catches up with demand or not, and the "right man's" name was on the tip of his tongue. His suggestion for a national farm spokesman was Dean William I. Myers of Cornell's Agriculture College, an educator with political savvy who is a power in the Gannett-Farm Bureau alliance which runs the Empire State's rural areas. He is also a vice-chairman of New York's Federal Reserve Bank, and in 1948 was prominently mentioned as a top candidate for Dewey's Secretary of Agriculture.

Myers' opponents were quick to call attention to an article in an Iowa farm journal in which he argued that "rising prices are the cheapest way to get the job done since neither manpower nor materials are needed to regulate the machinery. Under this system no questions are asked as to whose standard of living is to be reduced, nor by how much. The chips fall where they may." This sounded fine to the Farm Bureau leaders who began their battle against price controls in the middle of the last war. But such quaint Myers phrases as "what this country needs is more of the so-called chiselers who know and understand how high prices stimulate production" did make their task of boosting him for a top stabilization job somewhat difficult. One of the farm "leaders" said he knew just the man to get them together with Wilson—Victor Emanuel—an ultra-reactionary industrialist friend of Wilson's who knew Myers when he was serving as a Cornell trustee. But Fleming said he thought they could make their own appointments.

Wilson's office, meanwhile, had its hands full with labor's complaints that it was not being represented in the mobilization machinery. When he received the list of nominations the farm spokesmen were invited for a talk. It turned out to be a top-level meeting with Wilson and Eric Johnston on one side of the table and Kline leading the heads of the other organizations on the other. Brannan not only had not been invited to the meeting but learned about it only through word of mouth.

By this time Wilson had gone over the full list of nominees. For the top posts the farm spokesmen nominated—besides Myers—three economists "acquainted with agricultural problems." All three had at one time or another worked for the government; all three are now well-known bankers. One, Jesse Tapp, is a vice-president of Giannini's Bank of America in San Francisco. Another, Chester Davis, was known as a conservative administrator during the New Deal, and has

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since become chairman of the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank. The third, Roy Thompson, is president of the New Orleans Land Bank. The slate represented a rich variety of geographic experiences and a singularly coherent pattern of economic affiliations.

The names of the nominees for Johnston's Economic Stabilization Agency, a second-level bureau, had a different flavor. They were Jack Hutson, a former Undersecretary of Agriculture and Assistant Secretary of the United Nations, and Carl Farrington, who had also served in the Agriculture Department. Both are primarily civil servants. But then Kline was not particularly interested in Johnston's agency; in fact the lack of close friends there would make it easier to fight all types of price controls.

When it got down to the operating level in the National Production Administration, the list of nominees was diffuse. One was a retired vice-president of Sears-Roebuck, a company which has contributed prizes for the Grange's national youth contests. Another was a minor official in the co-op empire built up by the late H. E. Babcock, an organizer of the 1942 farm "revolt" against price controls. The third was a third-level government man.

Kline opened the meeting with Wilson by reviewing agricultural complaints that farmers' needs for machinery and labor allocation were not being adequately presented by Brannan's men. Waxing eloquent, he began spouting personal insults about Brannan and had to be asked to stick to the point. Some of his complaints were justified by facts. Many farmers were indeed worried about where they would get the labor to bring in next year's crops or the machinery to replace their present tools. But where had the real bottle-necks been?

In arranging for farm-machinery allocations, Agriculture Department officials had been left to cool their heels while Wilson's subordinates in the National Production Administration learned about the subject. On the farm-labor problem, they were dependent on the decisions of another Wilson appointee, Arthur S. Flemming, head of the Manpower Board. But Kline's political ambitions fed on his fellows' dissatisfaction. To the "bread and butter" spokesmen the idea of getting a farm man close to the top in the mobilization business had obvious merit.

To Kline achieving an end-run around Brannan would mean success in his efforts to keep control of the farm movement in his back pocket. This control has been in danger of declining as farmers awakened to the substantial benefits they would receive from the Fair Deal programs Brannan has advocated. During the thirties, when Farm Bureau membership suffered badly from the depression, its leaders had been ardent advocates of many New Deal farm proposals. But today the Farm Bureau is the NAM of agriculture, its leaders in control of millions of farmers happy with the status-quo by virtue of record farm prices.

In an indefinite "emergency," strategically placed Farm Bureau influence in the mobilization program can make Brannan's position impossible. He could be left to make the speeches while Kline's men made top-level agricultural policy. And if future conflicts find agriculture's mobilization spokesmen lined up with business against labor, that would strengthen the conservative bloc's stand against the Fair Deal labor-farmer alliance all the more.

Wilson told Kline and his followers that he would "consider" their recommendations to appoint one of their nominees as his full-time agricultural assistant and name an "advisory board" of farm leaders to help make agricultural policy. His office has since quietly let it be known that a "farm advisory committee" is in the making. Who will be named to it or what its powers will be is not yet known. But one thing is known by anyone who visits the gloomy executive offices of the Agriculture Department—Brannan has still not been consulted.

How far can Wilson go in knocking together the top heads in the Truman Administration? With Truman absent from the scene, whether in Florida or in Blair House, no one knows where Wilson's prince-breaking powers will end. He has already defeated Labor Secretary Maurice Tobin by taking manpower problems away from his department's jurisdiction. He has been snubbing Brannan for weeks on an affair which affects his Department vitally, both in political effect and administrative efficiency. The Defense Council, which was created to co-ordinate defense policy between Wilson and the cabinet officials in semi-weekly meetings, has degenerated into a discussion of administrative—as distinct from policy—problems. One by one the other government leaders are feeling the cold winds. The liberal cabinet members, naturally in closer alliance with non-business groups, have been the first to feel the ice.

Within their limited areas, all the Fair Deal leaders are fighting to maintain their positions. Brannan has announced the appointment of two Midwestern farm leaders as his assistants on farm-supply problems. Tobin has appointed former Sen. Frank Graham as his manpower chief in an effort to strengthen his hand in the struggle for power in which Wilson is still both judge and high executioner. They hope that sooner or later the President and the country will become convinced that only so many of the affairs of state can be left to the discretion of an efficient executive who can name his own "production men."

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THE RFC STORY

by Michael Straight

FOR THE PAST 20 years the role of the federal government in our economy has been increasing. For the past six years the standards of competence and integrity among many high federal officials has been falling.

These diverging trends have led to a new class of political profiteers who enrich themselves by corrupting the federal government. They in turn are forcing on us a major political struggle.

In this struggle the conservatives are the Procrusteans, seeking to chop the government down to the framework of human mediocrity that pervades Washington under Harry Truman.

The liberals in contrast seek to raise the performance of the government so that it may meet the tasks set by the nation's needs.

In broad terms this is the issue raised by the Fulbright Committee in its investigation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The Committee has unearthed sordid and sickening stories of mismanagement in the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

The conservative coalition in Congress, prodded by the banks, is exploiting Fulbright's findings to destroy the RFC. "We have lost the first skirmish," said Joe Martin, the Republican leader, after the House of Representatives voted to reorganize the RFC, "but the battle to abolish the RFC has just begun."

The need for a government lending agency is clear. The case is summed up by Sen. Paul Douglas, a leading member of the Fulbright Committee, in testimony on the reorganization of the RFC. Reviewing the gap in the private banking structure Douglas asserts:

> In the first place small business does find it difficult to get capital from local banks for long-term or intermediate capital investments.
>
> In the second place new businesses find it difficult to get under way because, being new businesses, they do not have a previous record of earnings which could be submitted to banks and therefore they frequently cannot obtain loans even to finance working capital.
>
> Thirdly . . . a good deal of evidence indicates that the big investment houses have agreements of various types with each other to restrict the entrance of new businesses into large-scale industries dominated by a few firms. Firms, which are dominant in a good many capital-goods industries, are so interlaced with the investment houses and the banks that the investment banking facilities of the country do not look with approval in many cases on financing competition to existing business.

Loans made to small business are obviously in the national interest.

Liberal bankers, including the present RFC chairman, have argued that direct government lending is not the sole answer. The problem is the absence of any center where county banks can rediscount intermediate and long-term loans. If the Federal Reserve Board were directed to underwrite long-term loans to small business and to insure them on a nationwide basis, a federal lending agency would become no more than a center of appeal to which small businessmen denied credit for monopoly reasons could turn.

However, this reform would leave untouched the third issue raised by Paul Douglas. For the abolition of direct government loans would deprive enterprising new producers like Reynolds Metals and Kaiser-Frazer of the chance of breaking into the fields dominated by giant corporations whose directors sit on the governing boards of credit institutions. How tightly the web of industrial and financial power is drawn is indicated by the new report of the Federal Trade Commission. It points out that there are 17 common directorships held between General Electric and 15 major banks and investment and insurance companies.

Another vital function of a direct lending agency in the government is to serve as a yardstick for private credit institutions. The RFC was created because of the incompetent performance of private banks in the years leading up to the depression. It raised their performance in the years of the New Deal. Today there are fewer banks in America than there were in 1920. Their deposits have increased about fivefold; their costs have no more than doubled. The huge increase in government bonds, due to war and defense, has left the banks conservative and lazy. Walter Cosgriff, a former banker, told a House Committee that as long as a banker can "work his thumb and forefinger to clip coupons" he has "an easy and profitable time" today.

A final need for a direct loan agency in government arises from the defense program.

In the last war, when industry refused to expand capacity except on its own terms, Roosevelt created the Defense Plant Corporation as a subsidiary of the RFC. It built for government $7.8 billion worth of vital industrial capacity.

In time of similar need, Truman has abandoned the expansion program to industry. So industry has made off with a steal of $2.6 billion in accelerated amortization. That is, industry has transferred $2.6 billion from

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corporate taxes to individual taxpayers in the past few months. If the defense program continues long, the same corporate profiteers have an equal or greater stake in forestalling the creation of a new Defense Plant Corporation by killing off the RFC.

The over-all need for the RFC is clear. Its over-all record is good. On 60,000 business loans aggregating $4,615 million the RFC has paid off all expenses and turned $327 million in net profits over to the Treasury.

Fulbright and Douglas do not question the need for a government lending agency. They do emphasize its challenge to public administration.

"When a government body makes loans to one individual and denies loans to others," Douglas testified, "it opens itself to great difficulties. It is a job that has to be done with great acumen, intelligence and restraint and with complete incorruptibility. For any government agency will necessarily be exposed to all kinds of influence both legitimate and illegitimate."

Very clearly the Committee demonstrates that acumen, intelligence, restraint and complete incorruptibility are lacking in many of the advisers that surround Truman.

Two years ago the Fulbright Committee first reviewed the RFC loan to the Waltham Watch Company. It asked why the directors granted the loan after its rejection had been recommended at all lower levels of the RFC. It asked further why, when the loan was granted, John Hagerty who handled it left the RFC to become President of Waltham. No answer was given.

The Committee continued its investigations. It recommended that the RFC lending be continued on a restricted scale. Instead the total volume of the RFC lending expanded. The Committee uncovered a rank promotion scheme in the making of the Texmass loan. It protested the granting of the loan. It was granted none the less and the company promptly defaulted. The Committee took its evidence to the President and asked for reforms. The President listened and did nothing. Patiently and armed with a good deal of evidence, Douglas and Fulbright told the President that better RFC directors than Walter Dunham and Edward Willett would have to be appointed when their terms ran out in 1951. Truman sent to the Senate the names of Willett and Dunham. The Committee concluded with reason that the RFC and the White House were working together without regard for Congressional sentiment. So it published its report on "Favoritism and Influence" in the RFC. The President dismissed the report as "asinine." As Committee hearings opened, the White House brought all manner of pressures to bear in order to silence or to discredit Fulbright. The hearings have barely opened up the issue of influence in government. But they have uncovered ugly evidence, ranging from incompetence to corruption, as a few case histories show.

The Texmass Petroleum Company. In 1944 a Dallas oil promoter, Homer Snowden, turned up in Boston. He talked a large group of wealthy Bostonians into taking "working interests" in wildcat oil properties. Thanks to loopholes in the tax laws the "working interests" provided wealthy citizens with opportunities for tax avoidance by allowing deductions for drilling and development, and further deductions for depletion allowances if the wells yielded oil. Snowden raised $22 million in Boston, including $8 million from two wealthy insurance companies, John Hancock and Massachusetts Mutual. These funds were largely squandered, with Texmass charging off $436,000 to Snowden personally as a bad debt.

Texmass was on the rocks when Arthur Kincaid, a Wichita banker, took it over. As President of Texmass, he applied for $22.5 million from the RFC. The Board voted Texmass $15.1 million, overruling the unanimous recommendation of its Washington Review Committee. Of the $15 million, $12 million was used to pay off creditors; only $1.5 million was assigned to working capital. The insurance companies were bailed out. Then Texmass went into receivership with a one-time assistant RFC controller its vice-president at $22,500 a year.

The Mapes Hotel. In 1949 a group of professional gamblers in Los Angeles, with long criminal records, decided to move to Nevada where gambling is legal. They leased the gambling concession of the Mapes Hotel. To handle their activities, the hotel built two new stories, one of which housed a gambling casino. The Bank of America, together with a local bank, began by financing the additions. Then they backed out. They were paid off by an RFC loan granted by the Board over the disapproval of its Review Committee.

The loan served also to bail out the management which brought in the Los Angeles gamblers and which was left without working capital. The RFC directors acknowledged that a third of the hotel's revenue came from gambling. They argued simply that gambling was legal in Nevada. In addition, the RFC chairman told the Committee: "If people go there to get divorces, they should have the facilities of a fine hotel."

Central Iron and Steel Company. This company was a subsidiary of the Barium Steel Company, owned by Joseph A. Sisto, who was expelled for malpractice from the New York Stock Exchange. When Sisto applied for an RFC loan in 1949, Paul Jantzen, an examiner in the RFC's Philadelphia loan agency, recommended dis-

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approval. "The reckless Mr. Sisto," wrote Jantzen, "who heads the parasitic Barium Steel Company and who has no sustained record of success in any line" ran Central Iron and Steel in order to bleed it white in management fees. The loan, he added, would not strengthen the company. The collateral was insufficient. There was no evidence of earnings sufficient to repay the RFC.

The Philadelphia office backed Jantzen. The Washington reviewer, R. Brodie, concurred. Then as the loan was about to be automatically rejected Director Willett intervened. He took Brodie out and replaced him with Hubert Steele. "Capable and experienced . . . ethical . . . outstanding business acumen," Steele wrote of Sisto's management. He recommended approval of a $5.3 million loan.

The Board granted the loan. Sisto immediately requested an increase. The loan was increased. Before it was advanced a new application was in from Sisto, this time to bail him out in buying another plant he was already committed for. "The reckless Mr. Sisto," Jantzen wrote, "makes promises first and then looks to others to supply all the cash." Jantzen, the Philadelphia office and the Washington Review Committee recommended disapproval. Steele recommended acceptance. The loan was approved.

On January 20, 1950, Sisto submitted his third application, for $1 million. Barium, Jantzen reported, had been subjected to "reckless expansion." "Now," he noted, "our borrower is in rather serious difficulty." The plant was losing money. The company was overloaded with debt. And Sisto's activity in the grey market had hurt him with legitimate steel buyers.

However, Sisto was well represented in the RFC. Joseph Rosenbaum of the Washington law firm of Goodwin, Rosenbaum, Meacham & Bailen and his contact man, former Rep. Joe Casey, were handling Sisto's case. "Get to work with some of the boys down there," Sisto wired Rosenbaum who was staying in Florida with Rex Jacobs. Rosenbaum and his friend Merl Young got to work.

This time, however, thanks to the courage of the Philadelphia RFC personnel and the Washington Review Committee, the Board hesitated, then cut back its loans to Sisto. The Senators concluded that more than bad judgment was involved in Sisto's case.

The Lustron Corporation. Lustron was formed at the war's end to build prefabricated houses. The need was urgent. Congress and Wilson Wyatt, the Housing Expediter, pressed the RFC to finance Lustron. The RFC put $37.5 million into the corporation. Its shareholders retained the equity interest for a total investment of $1.7 million.

Lustron suffered, the Senate Committee noted, from "waste, dissipation and careless and unintelligent management." In particular, it bungled contracts for the transportation of its houses. It paid off many debts including betting debts of Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

As Lustron moved toward deeper involvement with the RFC, pressure from the RFC increased. Lustron's president and principal stockholder, Carl Strandlund, testified under oath that Harley Hise, the RFC chairman, first recommended the employment of Merl Young in Lustron at $12,000 a year and then his promotion to vice-president at $18,000. Next Rex Jacobs, of the F. L. Jacobs Company of Detroit, from which Merl Young drew $10,000 a year in salary, was employed to survey Lustron for the RFC. Jacobs recommended that Strandlund's 86,000 shares of stock be offset by the sale of stock to Young and two colleagues for one cent a share. For $860, control of Lustron would have passed to them.

"On July 6, 1949," Strandlund testified, "Rex Jacobs called on me at the Lustron plant. While Mr. Jacobs was in my office Dunham called me from Washington and asked if Mr. Jacobs was there. He said that Jacobs was a good friend of his and urged me to 'talk freely' to him, repeating the phrase several times.

"Jacobs . . . " Strandlund added, "proposed that Lustron use his washing machines and told me that Merl Young would get $15 on each machine. . . . When I declined . . . Jacobs inquired of me 'what shall I tell Walter?' who he identified as Mr. Dunham.

"I replied, 'Tell Walter to keep his shirt on.' From then on I was in trouble." Strandlund concluded, as the Senate Committee reports, that "following the failure of attempts to place control of Lustron in the hands of his nominees Dunham was instrumental in directing the efforts of the RFC Board toward deliberate destruction of the Lustron Corporation."

An influence ring was tightening its grip on the RFC. Its well-laid plans were just beginning to mature when the Fulbright Committee stumbled on it, almost by accident. Evidence of its plans is still fragmentary; its members still stand in the shadows.

Rex Jacobs, the war profiteer, is one major figure. He induces Dunham to appoint him as the RFC examiner. He pays off Merl Young. He cultivates Donald Dawson, the President's aide and his highest adviser on personnel. He works closely with the Democratic Committee. He testifies that he is interested in new defense contracts.

Joseph Rosenbaum, the tax lawyer, boasts, according to sworn testimony, that he holds two RFC directors in his "hip pocket." Even L. M. Giannini arranges contacts for him. He is the man in the back room, avoiding

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direct contacts, weaving a web of intrigue and influence, sitting at his desk all day, talking on the telephone and having his lunch brought in. His specialty is tax avoidance—"tax evasion within the framework of the law" Senator Fulbright called it. His main weapon is the loophole provided by the capital-gains tax. He picks up defunct corporations and uses them to trade in stocks. He makes fabulous profits and instead of paying legitimate taxes on them, pays only 25 percent in taxes as capital gains. In one such transaction, by finagling ships between Panama and the US, Rosenbaum's colleague, Casey, and his friends cleared $2.8 million on a personal investment of $100,000 in two years.

Donald Dawson is the man who exploits his control of personnel to place the prestige of the White House behind these influences. Also, according to Dunham, he brings together the RFC and the Democratic National Committee. Dawson, Dunham testifies, is part of the "social group" including Jacobs, Willett and William Boyle, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, which seeks to dominate RFC lending. His name crops up in many other agencies, pressing for certain loans and concessions.

Merl Young is the front man, the contact man, possibly the payoff man. Who knows how he works? Perhaps a rich client comes to Washington and dines with Rosenbaum. Young drops in. "Just come from seeing the boss," he remarks casually. "The boss?" "Uncle Harry," murmurs Young, picking at the salad. "Been talking to him about the RFC. . . . By the way, you seen these new White House passes?" He flashes his pass, the one given to all husbands of White House stenographers. Somewhere in the conversation mention is made of his title on the Democratic National Committee. After a while he leaves, remarking that "the boss" expects him back. Several witnesses testified under oath that they had been led to believe that Young was Truman's nephew.

These services, however, hardly justify the funds paid over to Young. The Fulbright Committee established that to Rosenbaum and Jacobs he owes $7,500 on the mink coat, $8,500 on an investment in a brewery, $32,000 on loan from the Atlantic Basin Company, $7,000 to Rosenbaum's insurance company, for which he solicits insurance without a license, and $120,000 to the F. L. Jacobs Company. Young has no current earnings that make probable early repayment of these loans. Committee members guess that Young is the payoff man and that the "loans" he receives he shares with others.

In the light of these revelations, and egged on by Jesse Jones, Herbert Hoover, the *Wall Street Journal* and other echoes from the twenties, the House of Representatives came within three votes of killing off the RFC. A harder test, on the RFC appropriations, is still to come. Yet there is no logic in its destruction. The Department of Interior was not destroyed because Albert Fall once inhabited it. No one proposes that the Senate be abolished because it houses Joseph McCarthy. Abolish the RFC and the need for government lending and the problem of corruption in government remain.

The first task, as Senator Fulbright knows, is to minimize the scope of human error. The reforms he proposes include a single administrator for the RFC; full publicity to all loan applications and for lobbyists and attorneys who represent borrowers; and prohibition of employment by the RFC borrowers of the RFC personnel. Many reforms have already been carried out.

In addition Fulbright asks searching questions of a general nature. Should a Senator make appointments with government officials for constituents who seek favors? How much pressure is legitimate on their behalf? Should government administrators be free of restraints, or should they be prohibited, as judges are supposed to be prohibited by a code of ethics, from discussing pending cases outside the courtroom or benefiting personally from the decisions they hand down? Fulbright argues that morality is more important than organization in public life. He recommends a new Hoover Commission to review the whole field of ethical standards in American politics and public administration.

All this is worth while. But there are clear limits to the effectiveness of legislation, given the incentive to corrupt and the willingness to be corrupted. The incentive is always present, given private enterprise, government regulation and vast public spending. The temptation is always present, given inflation and inadequate pay for public officials. Employment with a borrower can be forbidden as a reward for delivering the Government of the US to a special interest. Cash passes hands instead. A new code of ethics may be created only to be universally ignored.

Minimizing the scope of human error is only part of the solution; the rest is to develop and support leadership in government service. The need is for men of "great acumen, intelligence and complete incorruptibility." The solution is to find the men. They are present in America. They are not being used. In part the road to leadership in the government has been blocked by the wild abuses of McCarthyism, in part by Harry Truman's stubborn support of incompetent and corrupt men. Neither McCarthy's bigoted intolerance or Truman's excessive toleration can be allowed to weaken the government. The creative energy of America must flow around all obstacles and move on.

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HAROLD L. ICKES: *Oil Befouls Our Political Life*

IN THEIR latest foray against the rich offshore oil lands of California, Louisiana and Texas, the oil interests and their tools have adopted a familiar tactic. In a series of articles by one Allen Duckworth originating in the Dallas *Morning News* but carried also, as might be expected, by that willing servitor of private interests, the Los Angeles *Times*, the assertion by the United States of its paramount interest in these lands is referred to as "the Big Grab." In heavy type on page one, abreast of its title, the *News* carries this legend: "The federal grab of tidelands has clouded title to property all over America. Its implications are tremendous. 'The Big Grab', now running in the *News*, tells the inside story."

In fact, the *News* and the "me too" Los Angeles *Times* does more than "tell the inside story." They invent a tale reeking with false insinuations and inventions. All of the states with ocean shorelines continue to possess and have the use of their tidelands just as they always have had. More than this, they never had, nor are they now legally entitled to, anything seaward of the low-water mark. This is all that any state originally had. It is a prevarication that is not even subtle for Mr. Duckworth to charge a "Big Grab" on the part of the federal government with respect to the tidelands because such a "grab" has never even been imagined and would be promptly restrained by the federal courts if it should be attempted.

"Big Grab" indeed! As if the United States Government could "grab" what is, and always has been, its own. "Reassert its rights" would be a more accurate description of what the federal government has done. It merely corrected the error into which it had fallen, under a misapprehension as to the law, of allowing the coastwise states to exercise a sovereignty that was not theirs. Since Mr. Duckworth would have had no difficulty in ascertaining the facts, the only conclusion that can be drawn from his use of deliberate falsehoods is that the truth would not serve the purpose of those who are using him to confuse the issues for the benefit of the oil interests.

If the oil barons are willing by their silence to adopt Mr. Duckworth's tissue of lies, then they have put themselves in the same category with this modern Munchausen. If they prefer to fight honestly on the issue of whether the federal government should hold on to what is its own or quitclaim its offshore oil lands to the states for the benefit of the oil interests, then they ought to dissociate themselves from Mr. Duckworth's mendacities which the two newspapers in question apparently cheerfully underwrite.

Another cheap trick in which Mr. Duckworth abundantly indulges is to refer to this writer sneeringly as "Honest Harold" Ickes, a designation distasteful to me. It would seem, according to the "veracious" Allen Duckworth, that I might have been entitled to the sobriquet "honest" if, when a gnawing doubt had arisen in my mind as to whether the federal government might have right and title to the offshore oil lands, I had sat still and done nothing about it. It would appear that to be "honest" in the eyes of this crusader for what is true I would only have had to be false to my oath of office.

Duckworth, the truth-teller, is also logical. In the first of his craftily poisonous articles, he wrote: "Republican Harding's Administration contributed Teapot Dome—'the Big Steal'. Democrat Truman's Administration has given us the federal tidelands claim—'the Big Grab'." Who tried to put over "the Big Steal" by bribing the Secretary of the Interior? The oil interests! Who are besetting Congress today in an effort to put over "the Big Grab?" These same oil grabbers and their oleaginous and bribable camp followers! Mr. Duckworth would not have made himself so ridiculous if some friend had told him that, since the federal government, according to the Supreme Court, owns the offshore oil lands, it cannot very well "grab" them. But that people are trying to grab them, by hook or by crook, from their rightful owner there can be no doubt. And their identity is well known.

The Capitol today is swarming with greasy-fingered oil lobbyists who, as usual, have crackling greenbacks to spend *ad lib* in quarters where they will do the most good. What they dearly want, at whatever price, is another quitclaim bill which would convey ownership of the offshore oil lands away from all of the people, thereby losing the taxpayer literally billions of dollars that might be used on the education of their children. Slick operators want to enrich themselves at the expense of the children. They are not willing even to set these publicly owned undersea lands up as a reserve for our armed forces or to dedicate them to the payment of the public debt. Ruthless greed has never paraded so wantonly in hideous nakedness. Human nature can be seen at its worst in Washington today where devoted Senators and Representatives are supposed to be working for the public welfare in deference to their oaths of office. Mammon is in the saddle while civic virtue runs to cover. Oil continues to befoul the pure stream of our democratic power.

HAROLD L. ICKES

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

THE PESSIMISM OF BERTRAND RUSSELL

by James R. Newman

NEITHER of these small books can fail to disappoint the admirers of Bertrand Russell, even those who value him less highly as a publicist than as a philosopher. *Unpopular Essays* (the title is explained in a preface that is painstakingly droll) is a random collection of lectures, Haldeman-Julius booklets and similar minor items which have appeared during the last few years. *The Impact of Science on Society* contains the Matchette Foundation Lectures delivered last year at Columbia University. Both volumes are lucid and agreeable; Russell is incapable of being dull. And it is superfluous to report that he continues with admirable tenacity to practise reasoning in an age that has committed itself to other faiths. Nevertheless, both books fall short, though it should be said that *The Impact of Science on Society,* having greater unity and discipline and fewer interludes of wayward playfulness, is the more impressive of the two. Little new is to be found in these essays; Russell has dealt with many of the same subjects in earlier writings and even here he tends to repeat himself. Irony and paradox, characteristic attributes of his style, are laid on with a trowel. There is a good deal of plain intellectual rubbish—oversimplifications, contradictions, errors of fact.

UNPOPULAR ESSAYS, by Bertrand Russell (Simon & Schuster; $2.50).
THE IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON SOCIETY, by Bertrand Russell (Columbia University Press; $2).

One major theme runs through most of the essays and lectures. The evils of the world in which we live are the product of man's unreason. Irrationality provokes fear; fear breeds dogmatism, intolerance and cruelty; these, in turn, are the causes of individual unhappiness and of social catastrophes, of which the worst is war. In past ages human ferocity was handicapped by technical limitations. The extermination of great masses of people was an expensive and wearisome task. But considerable progress in the art of genocide was made during World War II, and now at last the advance of science promises weapons capable of extinguishing life on our planet. Russell does not profess to be certain that this will happen. But he regards universal death, or at least a reversion to barbarism, as a probability unless men are prepared to be more reasonable. The indispensable step is the "establishment of a single government for the whole world."

The question is, of course, whether the disposition to reasonableness is sufficiently widespread to persuade the adoption of the proposed remedy. For presumably if men were reasonable, wars would have been abolished long ago and a world government would be unnecessary. Russell is silent on this dilemma. He offers us, as he has often done before, an immense catalogue of human idiocies and frailties, with an impressive accumulation of evidence to show that "folly is perennial," that rational men are as hard to find as lions on a steppe, that the human race is an agglomerate of superstitious, fearful, quarter-witted bipeds. Nonetheless he appeals to this great herd of foolish animals to lay aside its foolishness, to emulate liberal empiricist philosophers, to become for the sake of self-preservation at once "logical and benevolent." As to how this might be achieved he does not venture an opinion. It is clear from what he says that a transformation of sufficient rapidity to forestall chaos would require a miracle. But Russell does not, one may be quite certain, believe in miracles.

The essays have their share of excellent things, of commonplaces and of nonsense. Russell has for years been belaboring Plato and Hegel: the first for being reactionary, the second for expounding a system of turgid Teutonic humbuggery which inspired Marx and less disagreeable thinkers. In "Philosophy's Ulterior Motive" Russell cracks his old favorites over the head, adding Kant and a few others to round out the company. Hume, the *enfant terrible* of philosophy, is more kindly treated: ". . . He had a comfortable temperament, and he perhaps derived as much pleasure from annoying the perpetrators of fallacies as he could have derived from inventing fallacies of his own." (The description may in part be said to fit Russell.) Aristotle was an incautious fellow who perpetrated many sillinesses by reciting as scientific facts matters about which he knew nothing and which he refused to take the trouble to observe. He said, for example, that women have fewer teeth than men. Had he bothered to look into his wife's mouth, he could have avoided this mistake. The main objection to the Buchenwald furnaces and Siberian labor camps is not their cruelty but rather that "it is not worth while to inflict a comparatively certain present evil for the sake of a comparatively doubtful future good." This is one of the few sensible things ever expressed on the barren problem of means vs. ends.

Emphasis is laid repeatedly on the need for "wisdom" in the use of the new powers handed over to us by technicians. Science can "diminish bad things and it can increase good things." Unwisely used, it is certain to intensify the ancient evils of tyranny and war, evils which are not offset by the benefits of penicillin and frost-free refrigerators. The method of acquiring this wisdom is described only vaguely. Rus-

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sell recognizes the role of education in the good life and esteems the insights of Freud and the importance of psychological science. On the whole, however, he prefers to lecture us in the more formal terms of nineteenth-century liberalism, to exhort us to come to our senses. He illustrates his points with tasteless little jokes which are not of the nineteenth century. For example: "A medical man who specializes in such ailments, assured me that the exhibitionist can be cured by the simple device of having trousers that button up the back instead of the front. But this method is not tried because it does not satisfy people's vindictive impulses."

The ironic primer style is well suited for conveying sensible ideas. Its advantages are displayed in discussing vexed and emotion-laden problems or in dispelling sentimentalities such as those treated in "The Virtue of the Oppressed." There is no reason, merely because at various times they have been mistreated, to ascribe superior virtue to Italians, Hungarians, Poles, Irishmen, women, children, morons, American Indians, or the proletariat. It is delightful to hear plain words spoken on this subject. But the primer style also has a beguiling way of tempting the reader to accept absurdities. Speaking of the necessity for a firm military alliance so that the threat of war may be averted, Russell observes:

> At a certain stage, when the Alliance had acquired sufficient strength, any Great Power still refusing to join should be threatened with outlawry, and, if recalcitrant, should be regarded as a public enemy. The resulting war, if it occurred fairly soon, would probably leave the economic and political structure of the United States intact, and would enable the victorious Alliance to establish a monopoly of armed force, and therefore to make peace secure.

For a philosopher who has devoted half his life and at least four-massive tomes to demonstrating the proposition, self-evident to him, that mathematics is only an extension of logic, this seems a hasty way to dispose of world problems.

Lowes Dickinson remarked to Lord Keynes — the story could not have pleased him—that "Bertrand Russell once told me that in early life he had thought of studying economics, but had found it too easy!" Various pronouncements on social and political and economic matters to be found in the books under review add meaning to the Dickinson anecdote. We are informed that in the middle ages "teaching became the exclusive prerogative of the Church with the result that there was little progress, either intellectual or social"; that the Liberal theory of politics is a "recurrent product of commerce" because, among other reasons, "the relation of buyer and seller is one of negotiation between two parties who are both free; it is most profitable when the buyer or seller is able to understand the point of view of the other party"—a broadmindedness and modesty not notably an attribute of businessmen; that superiority of class is rapidly disappearing and "now survives only in Soviet Russia." Opinions of this kind are witty, polished, entertaining and ridiculous. They are no less mischievous because Russell turns them out easily, and with a naughty relish, as if to shock Mr. Gladstone.

It is established beyond argument that Bertrand Russell is a distinguished philosopher, a writer of luminous prose, a man of courage and independence, a protestant against evil and prejudice, an aristocrat of the intellect and spirit. "Liberty, scientific freedom and mutual forbearance" are the values Russell has strived all his life to preserve. In these essays he continues to do so, but hostility and bitterness now color his tone. I cannot help feeling that Russell writes books of this sort more because he does it so well than because of any real faith in the efficacy of what he is saying. In anger and in despair at a world bent on self-destruction he indulges in extravagances, pretending to make simple what is not simple, to dispose of difficult problems by ridicule and excoriation. "The reason so few good books are written is that so few people who can write know anything." Bagehot's observation is not altogether inappropriate here. On the subject of politics, Russell is to be read with caution—and so much the more when frustration and pessimism cloud his judgment.

BEHIND THE LEGEND

ROBERT BURNS, by David Daiches (Rinehart; $3.50).

VERY LITTLE good criticism has been written about Robert Burns. Carlyle almost succeeded, with the luck of being a Scotsman and a Victorian to help him. Arnold made a valiant and commendable attempt. Modern critics have rarely tried. The Scots dialect gets in the way, and embarrassing doubts or enthusiasms about national poets and, most of all, our current inability to consider lyrics critically.

David Daiches is well equipped to get over these hurdles. He and his publishers have neatly handled the dialect with marginal glosses which make the language as translucent as it can be made. Daiches is enough of a Scotsman to know his subject sympathetically, enough of a cosmopolitan to keep the tears out of his voice at mere mention of Scotia or Kilmarnock. And unfashionable though it may be, he likes singing lyrics. This book begins and ends with its most original chapters—one a reinterpretation of Scottish literature as a background for the understanding of Burns, the other an analysis of some of his finest songs.

As much as any of his biographers, Burns himself in his poems is responsible for creating a portrait of himself dramatized as raffish and reckless. But to understand him as an artist, the plowman and the rake had better fade out, and the reader be left to contemplate, as with the Cheshire Cat or Dante's Beatrice, only the eyes and the smile.

Daiches works up his portrait of Burns through small strokes—running comments on all of the important poems, with just enough of Burns's career and personality, drawn eclectically from original sources, to clarify his artistic achievement. The key words are pride, independence, technical skill, physical passion and intelligence. Only Burns's energetic humor seems underplayed, though this remark may not be a fair judgment, since Daiches rightly redresses a balance by dwelling on Burns's masterful satires. Daiches is fully aware that "The Jolly Beggars" and "Holy Willie's Prayer" are triumphs as great

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as "Green Grow the Rashes, O," though triumphs of a different order.

The full-length that slowly emerges is a dramatic portrait. Burns is best when he is most himself, drawing naturally upon a long and strong native poetic tradition. Class struggles handicapped him: he was a petty government official who sympathized with France and America in a time of national revolutions, a Scotsman awed by the English poetic tradition even at the height of the late-eighteenth-century Scottish renascence, a farmer's son who mixed with Edinborough nobility and intellectuals. Whenever he became socially aware of his position, his verse turned rhetorical, uncertain, truculent.

Daiches does what should be done in the study of Robert Burns: he concentrates on his poems, almost line by line. This volume is the first in the Rinehart Critical Studies; the series is off to a good start. DONALD A. STAUFFER

Donald A. Stauffer, chairman of the Department of English at Princeton University, is the author, among other books, of "The Nature of Poetry."

EXTREME PERSONALITIES

THE DELICATE PREY AND OTHER STORIES, by Paul Bowles (Random House; $3).

SUCH DARLING DODOS, by Angus Wilson (Morrow; $2.50).

PAUL BOWLES's title story contains four murders and sundry other deviations from normal behavior including sodomy, insanity and emasculation. It is preceded by a macabre tale ("By the Water") of a young Arabian traveler who is endangered by monsters human and crustacean, and is followed by a terrifying piece ("A Distant Episode") about a professor captured by the Reguiba, who remove, successively, his tongue and his mind, making him the mad plaything of their frequent orgies. Although not all of Bowles's stories are quite so preoccupied with physical violence, they invariably present one or another aspect of human aberration, and always depict the degradation or the disintegration of the individual.

Several of these stories are individually arresting, and carry the impact of a blow from a lead pipe. But such wholehearted immersion in a blood bath frequently defeats whatever purpose the author may have had in mind. Too often, Bowles squanders his very considerable talents in accumulating horror more for its own sake than in the service of some larger meaning. Many of his stories, like his first novel, are banal rather than enlightening, sensational rather than significant. The total effect of his volume is akin to that produced by a visit to the crypt of a waxwork. The reader is initially impressed by an external verisimilitude that passes for the real thing. But on closer examination, the blood on the truncated corpses is seen to be only red paint, and the studied repetition of violence and grotesquery produces, ultimately, little more than apathy. To put it crudely, Bowles is doing little more than flogging, expertly, a dead horse.

Angus Wilson, like Paul Bowles, is a comparatively young writer who enjoyed a minor success among critics and other writers before achieving popular success with a first volume, *The Wrong Set*, published at approximately the same time as Bowles's *The Sheltering Sky*. Also like Bowles, Wilson is interested in extreme situations and extreme personalities; his new stories continue to examine skeptically the mores of the less wholesome members of the English middle class; his world is one of genteel deadbeats, academic harpies, unhappy ambivalents and misunderstood children. In "A Little Companion" and "Mummy to the Rescue" he gives us a pair of bizarre and shocking monsters who in their own way are more than a match for the legless and armless horror that confronts the bewildered traveler of *The Delicate Prey*.

Here the similarities end. Wilson is a thoroughly disciplined craftsman who never allows his situations to dominate his characters, never permits subject matter to get out of control. With one possible exception — the blurred and somewhat ragged "Heart of Elm"—all of these stories are tightly written, thoroughly integrated pieces. Most important is Wilson's sometimes almost uncanny ability to achieve, with great economy, the essence of a character who exists on more than one emotional or intellectual level; these characters, no matter how stupid, crass or petty they may be, are human beings, not animated puppets. And one never feels that the author is setting them up, like tenpins, for the idle pleasure of sending them sprawling.

The cynicism of Wilson's earlier stories is now tempered by the author's more compassionate attitude toward his stumbling, frightened and bedeviled characters. *Such Darling Dodos* establishes Angus Wilson as one of the most gifted and versatile satirists writing today. WILLIAM PEDEN

William Peden is a professor of English at the University of Missouri, where he is in charge of the writing program and director of the Writers' Workshop. He has published "a few short stories, several articles and a great many reviews."

MUSIC

Bing's First Season

THE FACTS are now in about the Metropolitan Opera's first twenty-week subscription season under the general management of Rudolf Bing. It has been an uneven season, now brilliant and now tawdry, but the morale of the company is greatly improved, and the high moments have been higher than any in the latter years of Edward Johnson's managerial regime. Yet Bing himself remains a good deal of an enigma. That he is a shrewd businessman nobody who has observed the amazing success of the "Fledermaus" revival can doubt. His ability to bring together performances on a high level of artistic co-ordination was proved by "Don Carlo" and "Fidelio." But the restaging of "Pagliacci" showed that he is also capable of supporting a chi-chi little-theatre experimentation that has no place in an institution commanding the world's best craftsmen; and the casting and presentation of the Mozart operas and some of the standard Italian works often bordered upon cynicism.

The two unqualified successes of the past season were "Fledermaus" and "Don Carlo." With "Fledermaus" Bing bridged the historic gap between the

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Metropolitan Opera and the Broadway public, bringing thousands of playgoers to the house for the first time. He met the commercial theatre on its own ground, offering slick and up-to-date scenery, costumes and stage direction, an English book one could listen to without cringing, and a cast that could outsing any on Broadway and—in some cases, at least—act fully as well.

Unfortunately, the connection between "Fledermaus" and the loftier items in the repertory was almost nonexistent. The new patrons wanted "Fledermaus" or nothing; they were patronizing a hit show, and they were not willing to take "Don Giovanni" or "Tristan und Isolde" as a substitute. The upshot is that the Metropolitan now has two publics. This is a fine state of affairs from the box-office point of view —while it lasts. From all evidence, however, the new audience consists of transients who will drop away unless Bing can follow "Fledermaus" with another piece as popular and as far removed from the orbit of grand opera.

For the regular patrons of the Metropolitan, the opening-night production of Verdi's "Don Carlo" gave a more apposite measure of Bing's abilities. This was an achievement of high seriousness. It was beautifully planned and executed in every department, from the stately period quality of Margaret Webster's stage direction and Rolf Gerard's designs to the devoted and eloquent musical direction of Fritz Stiedry. Operas are not given better anywhere.

Wagner's "The Flying Dutchman," another new production, was as well intended, but various contretemps kept it from making as striking an effect. Sheer opportunism overcame Bing, however, when he decided to restage the double bill of Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" and Leoncavallo's "Pagliacci." The budget permitted only a cut-rate job of designing and rehearsing. The two operas were rushed onto the stage on a few week's notice—nine months' planning had gone into the others—and two new stage directors, Hans Busch and Max Leavitt, were forced to make debuts with performances that were hastily conceived and half-prepared.

To Bing's discredit, he made no move, even superficially, to remedy the casting and staging that have made "Don Giovanni," "The Barber of Seville" and "Faust" disgraceful travesties at the Metropolitan for many seasons back. "Don Giovanni" was badly sung by most of the principals, and acted in half a dozen styles; "The Barber" was cheap; "Faust," an eyesore.

The general excellence of the German repertory—despite the hopeless settings and costumes of all the operas in it—swung the balance in Bing's favor again. Except for "Die Walküre," which received the careless treatment of a perennial repertory work, Wagner's "Ring" was scrupulously rehearsed and about as well sung as it can be in an era when great Wagnerian singers are scarce. The return of Kirsten Flagstad for a final series of appearances before her retirement from the opera stage was justified by the amplitude and nobility of her singing. With Bruno Walter, also a returning veteran, as conductor, Beethoven's "Fidelio" was a warming experience, if not technically an ideal accomplishment. Strauss's "Der Rosenkavalier" took a new lease on life; Reiner conducted it miraculously, and Helen Traubel, playing the part for the first time, was an effective Marschallin.

In engaging new singers, Bing's judgment was neither better nor worse than Johnson's had been. Fedora Barbieri, Victoria de los Angeles, Hans Hotter, Sven Nilsson and Cesare Siepi were distinguished foreign additions to the roster; and a twenty-year-old American coloratura, Roberta Peters, made a firm place for herself. Delia Rigal, Paolo Silveri and Gunther Treptow were in the end disappointing because of vocal defects. Of the two new conductors, Fausto Cleva, chorus-master at the Metropolitan some years ago, was admirable, while Alberto Erede, imported from Italy, was technically inept.

The ballet was not signally improved by its association with Antony Tudor and Ballet Theatre. Toward the end of the season Zachary Solov, a young choreographer, did the "Fledermaus" ballet over. His work was somewhat better than Tudor's and he was promptly engaged as chief choreographer for next season.

At the end of Bing's first year, I find my admiration for his energy and dynamism undiminished. But I have begun to be afraid of his impetuosity and his willingness at times to make significant commitments in haste. Moreover, a repertory company like the Metropolitan needs to maintain a substantial quality throughout. Bing is a brilliant producer of certain single items, but the very excellence of these productions makes the operas to which he has not given much attention seem even sloppier.

CECIL SMITH

THEATRE

Lillian Hellman's Garden

IT IS MY BELIEF that Lillian Hellman's "The Autumn Garden" is the most deftly constructed, the most maturely thought, the most scrupulously written play produced here in a long time; I do not think that, because I directed it, I should refrain from saying this. Moreover, since Miss Hellman is one of the most important American playwrights, I feel that criticism of her latest play should attempt to confront it on the high level of its ambition.

"The Autumn Garden" has the density of a big novel. If this is a fault, to complain about it is like complaining, as a folk saying puts it, that the bride is too beautiful. The play is dense because Miss Hellman has tried to construct it not along the usual lines of a cumulatively progressive single story, but as a compact tissue of life unraveled with the apparent casualness of ordinary behavior. Ten people's lives are disclosed, and what holds their interlocking stories together is the author's theme and point of view.

To make a formula of it, what Miss Hellman is saying in "The Autumn Garden" is that each of our lives constitutes a decisive act, and that when the chain of these acts reaches a certain point—around the middle years—no sudden movement of our will is likely to alter the shape and meaning of what

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we have made. To hope, as most of us do, that though we dream one thing and do another, it will come out all right in the end, come out satisfactorily according to some abstract conception we have fuzzily projected in our imagination, is to indulge in a lie that will finally rob us of pleasure, dignity and substance.

A play's ideology is not precisely the same thing as its content. What is significant in "The Autumn Garden" is not so much its thematic emphasis as Miss Hellman's approach, her feeling about most of us of the educated near-upper class. We are earnest, we yearn, but we are not serious, we have no clear purpose. We have no binding commitments to ourselves or to others; we are attached to nothing. We allow ourselves to be deviated because we do not know exactly where we want to go.

This is not, as Miss Hellman suggests her thought in terms of her characters, simply a matter of high moral aims. The dilettante painter of her play, an intellectual lightweight and universal flirt, is actually less damaged than the intelligent Crossman whose words are always sounder than those of the others. The painter wants little more than what he does, while Crossman satisfies himself with "understanding" everything except that he is wasting his life and that his "honesty" has no object except to hide his own futility from himself.

The people of "The Autumn Garden" are ordinary, nice people, average to their class—but in this sense they are representative of far more of us than we care to believe. Miss Hellman finds none of them bad, but in the light of their own sweet earnestness, rather silly. They are unwittingly self-condemned, even before they are socially condemned, because they are not intelligent in relation to any total human objective. They are idealists whose ideals are conventions and chimeras rather than goals. They will wither and disappear in a mist of empty sighs.

Against these people, Miss Hellman pits the half-European Sophie, a normal girl who wants only to do an honest job back in the grim environment of her native land, where things are not pretty or "good," but concrete, unromanticized, real. Miss Hellman does not make a heroine of this girl; in fact she makes her rather sharp, shrewd, decently matter-of-fact and not above taking advantage—with a certain humor and pride that some might mistake for cynicism—of the folly of the sentimentalists around her.

"The Autumn Garden" is lucid, witty, incisive, dramatic, unquestionably the subtlest and most probing of Miss Hellman's plays. If it has a limitation, it is a philosophic or spiritual limitation which is part of her objectivity. The author is just with her characters; she sees them with a certain smiling asperity, an astringent, almost cruel, clarity. But she is unable to reveal in their weakness that which still makes them part of what is blessed and great in life. The blunderers in Chekhov are brothers in our nobility even as in our abjectness. The characters in "The Autumn Garden" are our equals only in what we do not respect about ourselves. Miss Hellman refuses to be "metaphysical," poetic or soft. She will not embrace her people; she does not believe they deserve her (or our) love. Love is present only through the ache of its absence. Miss Hellman is a fine artist; she will be a finer one when she melts.

HAROLD CLURMAN

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MOVIES

Average Week

A BRITISH film company, Pilgrim Pictures, has made an unusual, interesting and frequently entertaining movie called "Chance of a Lifetime." It appears to have no official backing, but is nonetheless a morale film, couched in the excellent British documentary style and designed to assure its audience that England's industrial heart is in the right place. I am not much impressed by the "once upon a time" sweetness of its "lesson" on labor-management relations; still, the parable of understanding and forbearance could, with a little stretching, be applied to the more bitter disputes of real economic life.

The owner of a small plow factory (Basil Radford) is so bedeviled by shortages, technical snags and plant breakdowns that he has become a tyrannical curmudgeon. His men threaten a strike and, in a moment of pettish self-pity, he invites them to try running the company themselves. They take him up, and, despite the obstructions of mean-spirited bank underlings and reactionary suppliers, seem to be making a magnificent go of it. When disaster strikes and the workers are on the verge of throwing in their hands, the owner, moved by the spirit and intelligence of his former employees, comes back as a fellow worker and saves the day.

Very pretty and not very real, but the story is worked out in details of human behavior that are both real and engrossing. Radford, putting aside the Blimpish obtusity that has made him famous, is a touching example of a man pressed to the limit of his nervous strength. The men, particularly Bernard Miles and Julien Mitchell, present a wonderfully

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convincing mixture of bravado, worry and determined optimism. Miles also directed the picture; it is a work in which he and his colleagues must have taken real pleasure and of which they have a right to be proud.

Despite a richness of production unusual even today in postwar European pictures and despite the admirable use that a skillful photographer (Henri Alekan) has made of the Venice and Verona locations, "The Lovers of Verona" has an amateur look. This, I think, is because the plot device is so stale, so fatally mechanical, that you would expect only an amateur to be attracted by it. The script was, in fact, written by Jacques Prévert ("Port of Shadows"), which only proves that the best craftsmen have their inept moments.

The deplorable idea is that you pretend to be staging a play—"Romeo and Juliet" in this case—and then manipulate the fates of a couple of extras in the fictitious production so that they echo in "life" the events on the stage. The aim is to contrast the glittering puppets of the play with the flesh-and-blood passions of the bit players; the result always is that the bit players are so buffeted by the rigid demands of coincidence that they become the puppets of puppets.

Anouk Aimée, making her debut, is emotionally passive; she seems less an actress than a director's eager pupil. Serge Reggiani (seen earlier in "The Sinners") is again as brash and ingratiating as a monkey and like a monkey he tends to become tiresome.

As it comes to the screen, Bill Mauldin's "Up Front" is not war; it is a GI reverie, compounded of foxhole loyalty, friendly girls, plenty of vino and the dogfaces making monkeys of the brass. David Wayne and Tom Ewell, particularly the latter, are apt impersonators of Joe and Willie and, one by one, the unforgettable cartoons jump from the screen. The sting has gone out of Mauldin's comments on battlefront bureaucracy and the sly art of heroism, but the fun has been photographed in full measure.

ROBERT HATCH

(Continued from page 4)

In our first year of operation we broke down barriers against Negroes as bus drivers, telephone operators and insurance clerks. Companies which had never in their history employed a Negro (except perhaps as a janitor) broke their traditions. Barriers against religions and various of the different nationality groups were also reduced.

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I am now directing the campaign for an FEPC in Pennsylvania. We have a fine council representing 44 organizations in support of the proposed Pennsylvania FEPC. Our chances for success seem better than ever, as an FEPC bill largely drafted by our council has been introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature with the full support of Gov. John S. Fine's administration. . . . The bill may be pickled in committee as it was in the past years, or it may be amended to death. Promises from both parties in 1945, 1947 and 1949 were not enough to bring about passage in those sessions.

Our council is now facing a financial emergency and contributions will go far toward adding Pennsylvania to the list of fair-employment states. Contributors to our newsletter.

RICHARD A. STIMSON
Executive Director, State Council for a Pennsylvania FEPC
Harrisburg, Penn.

Television and Education

SIR: Just a note to offer my personal congratulations and thanks for the views expressed in your symposium on Television and Education (*NR*, February 26).

As a national honorary and professional radio and television fraternity, Alpha Epsilon Rho has taken no official position on the issue of channel reservations. But there can be no doubt that many of our 1,500 members realize that if education is to keep pace with the needs of our people and our nation, then we must make available to the educator the tools essential to the task.

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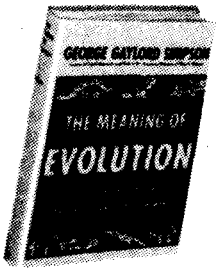

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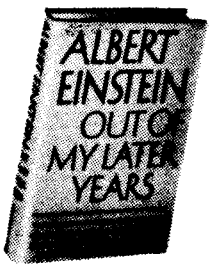

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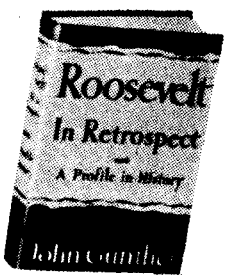

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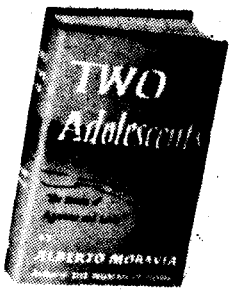

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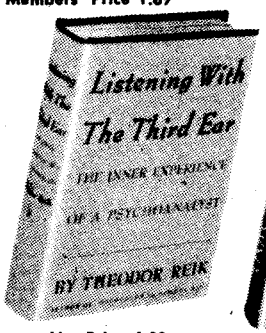

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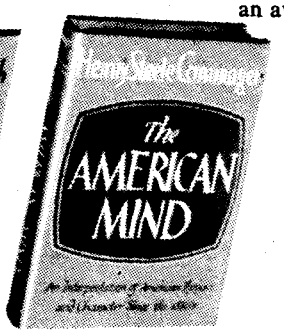

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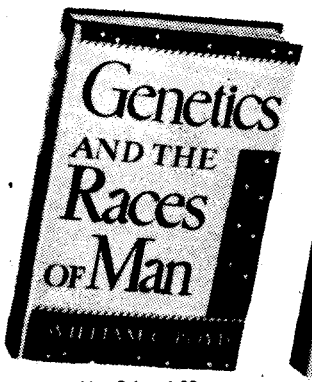

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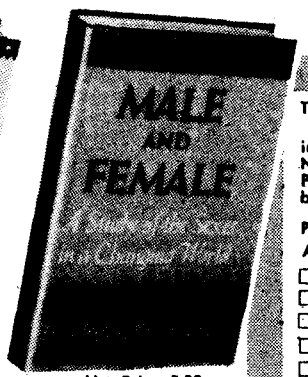

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